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# NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release**

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## NEW MEDICAL CLINIC A REALITY FOR ISLAND PARK

Island Park, Idaho – Senator Mike Crapo presented a check representing a \$30,000 grant and a \$197,000 low interest loan to Board Members and employees of Ashton Memorial, Inc., this morning at the new clinic. The clinic, which is open for patients, received its first ever walk-in client during the event.

In 2004, Ashton Memorial was approved for a Community Facility loan and grant to build a medical clinic for the Island Park area of Eastern Idaho. Ashton Memorial will operate the medical clinic and the clinic will be staffed by Roxanna Holmes, Nurse Practitioner, under the direction of a Rexburg doctor.

The clinic is located at 3670 Hwy 20, next door to Ponds Lodge. The new building, which will be maintained by Ashton Memorial, was remodeled to become a modern rural medical clinic that fits the rustic feeling of Island Park. Sheila Kellogg, Administrator, Ashton Memorial, Inc. said “The clinic will help everyone in this town, which has the longest main street in the country. There has been tremendous community support and we are excited to be able to bring this facility to Island Park.”

Citing the many benefits of having a local clinic, Senator Mike Crapo said “I’m pleased to be partnering with USDA Rural Development in providing assistance for this facility which will improve access to health care for Island Park and the many visitors enjoying the recreational opportunities Fremont County offers. Improving rural health care is an important part of maintaining the rural infrastructure we need to keep Idaho strong.”

Island Park has 215 full time residents, 1000 part time residents and tourists each year are estimated to bring upwards of 10,000 additional people to the area. There are currently no medical services available except for an ambulance service that is operated with volunteer help. The closest hospital is in Rexburg and the nearest clinic is located 20 miles away in Ashton or over the mountain in West Yellowstone, Montana.

Accessible healthcare is critical in order for rural communities to survive and prosper. This project will provide affordable and professional services that were previously too far away to meet the needs of residents. Traveling to Ashton or West Yellowstone for medical care, especially in the winter when roads are treacherous, will no longer be necessary.

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